

Message Text

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SUBJECT: JOE CLARK WINS TORY LEADERSHIP

1. ALBERTA MP JOE CLARK WON LEADERSHIP OF PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY SUNDAY NIGHT BY DEFEATING CLAUDE WAGNER ON FOURTH BALLOT 1187 VOTES TO 1122. IN GESTURE OF PARTY UNITY, WAGNER CALLED ON CONVENTION TO MAKE FINAL VOTE UNANIMOUS.

2. CLARK VICTORY SEEN AS SOMEWHAT OF AN UPSET SINCE HE HAD NOT BEEN CONSIDERED FRONT-RUNNER UNTIL FINAL WEEK OF RACE, WHEN SPECULATION OF FALTERING MULRONEY CAMPAIGN INITIATED SEARCH FOR COMPROMISE CANDIDATES. THIRTY-SIX YEAR OLD CLARK WAS YOUNGEST CANDIDATE IN RACE AND AMONG THOSE LABELLED RED TORIES BECAUSE OF PROGRESSIVE STAND ON SOCIAL ISSUES.

3. MAIN BOOST TO CLARK CAME DURING SATURDAY AFTERNOON CANDIDATE SPEECHES WHEN MULRONEY PULLED TACTICAL ERROR. APPARENTLY OVER-CONFIDENT AND WISHING TO DOWNPLAY HARD SELL OF PREVIOUS MONTHS, HE DELIVERED LOW-KEY SPEECH IN ALMOST MONOTONOUS FASHION AND FAILED TO GIVE ELECTRIFYING PERFORMANCE WHICH AUDIENCE WAS EXPECTING. SINCE SUPPOSED CHARISMA WAS HIS MAIN AND ONLY ASSET, HE LOST CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT BY FAILING TO DELIVER. SECOND CASUALTY OF SPEECHES WAS PAUL HELLYER WHO DELIVERED UNEXPECTED AND GRATUITIOUS BLAST AT RED TORIES, ALTHOUGH STANFIELD NIGHT

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BEFORE HAD LECTURED PARTY AGAINST JUST SUCH DIVISIVENESS.

HELLYER RECEIVED ONLY BOOS OF DAY. BEST SPEECH WAS GENERALLY CREDITED TO WAGNER, WHICH HELPED GET HIM TO FINAL BALLOT.

4. WITH TWO FRONT-RUNNERS HELLYER AND MULRONEY WOUNDED, BALLOTING LED TO STRANGE BED-FELLOWS. AFTER FIRST BALLOT RIGHT-WING CANDIDATE SINCLAIR STEVENS STARTED CLARK BANDWAGON BY WITHDRAWING AND ENDORSING CLARK IN APPARENT EFFORT TO STOP QUEBECKER WAGNER. FRINGE CANDIDATES GILLIES, FRASER, AND GRAFFTEY ALSO ENDORSED CLARK WHILE HELLYER WITHDREW IN FAVOR OF WAGNER. AFTER SECOND BALLOT, FLORA MACDONALD WENT TO CLARK BUT SURPRISINGLY STRONG RIGHT-WINGER JACK HORNER WENT TO WAGNER RATHER THAN TO FELLOW ALBERTAN CLARK. THUS RACE NARROWED TO WAGNER ON RIGHT, MULRONEY IN MIDDLE, AND CLARK ON LEFT. MULRONEY RELEASED DELEGATES WITH NO ENDORSEMENT AFTER THIRD BALLOT AND, DESPITE OPEN SUPPORT OF WAGNER BY DIEFENBAKER, MULRONEY DELEGATES GAVE FINAL BALLOT TO CLARK.

5. CLARK WILL NOT HAVE EASY JOB IN PULLING PARTY TOGETHER. ALREADY AFTER CONVENTION SOME QUEBECKERS WERE HEARD COMPLAINING THAT PC'S WOULD RATHER GO TO A RED TORY THAN TO A FRANCOPHONE WHO LED ON ALL BALLOTS EXCEPT THE LAST. SMALL CONSERVATIVES ARE LIKEWISE FAR FROM PLEASED THAT PARTY NOW IN HANDS OF A YOUNG PROGRESSIVE. DESPITE RHETORIC OF UNITY AT END OF CONVENTION, CLARK IS IN FACT PROBABLY A MINORITY LEADER AND IT WILL TAKE ALL OF HIS SKILL TO BRING ABOUT THE PARTY COHESION WHICH STANFIELD, IN PARTING COMMENTS, PLEADED FOR.
ENDERS

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